

PROJECT OBJECTIVES, GOALS, AND IMPLEMENTATION (POGI)

Youth Leadership Program with Central America

ECA/PE/C/PY-09-40

Office of Citizen Exchanges

Youth Programs Division

The POGI guidelines apply specifically to the Request for Grant Proposals (RFGP) issued by the Youth Programs Division for the Youth Leadership Program with Central America. The proposals must conform to the RFGP, the Guidelines stated in this document, and the standard Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI). An application not adhering to the conditions set forth herein may be deemed technically ineligible. These guidelines are specific to the program mentioned above and are IN ADDITION TO the guidelines outlined in the PSI. If there is a perceived disparity between the standard and program specific Guidelines and the program information supplied in the accompanying RFGP, the RFGP is to be the dominant reference.

This document not only provides guidance for the preparation of a proposal for the Youth Leadership Program but also establishes guidelines for the implementation of the program.

I. STATEMENT OF WORK

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) and the Public Affairs Sections (PAS) of U.S. Embassies are supporting exchanges that engage the participation of teenagers and adult educators and/or community leaders in intensive, substantive three-week projects in the United States and provide follow-on activities that help them apply their experiences upon their return home.

The responsibilities of the grant recipient will be the following:

1) Recruitment and Selection

- a) Conduct an open, merit-based competition for exchange participants in consultation with PAS, with clearly identified criteria for the selection and a formal process.
- b) Develop plans for outreach and recruitment of both students and educators that will generate a strong pool of qualified candidates.
- c) Develop applications for the students and teachers/administrators/community leaders.
- d) Recommend the final participants and alternates (No invitations may be issued without ECA or PAS clearance).

2) Preparation

- a) Contact participants before the program to provide them with program information, obtain parental approvals, and to gather information about their specific interests.
- b) Facilitate the J-1 visa application process, working with ECA and PAS.
- c) Conduct a pre-departure orientation for participants, including general and program-specific information, as well as intercultural training.
- d) Recruit, screen, and select diverse local host families to offer homestays (lodging and meals) to the participants during their stay in the host community(ies) and make other housing arrangements as needed.
- e) Orient host institutions, staff, and families to the goals of the program and to the cultures and sensitivities of the visitors.
- f) Make all round-trip international (complying with the Fly America Act) and domestic travel arrangements for the participants.
- g) Enroll participants in the Bureau's Accident and Sickness benefits plan for the period of the exchange.

3) Exchange Activities

- a) Design, plan, and implement intensive and substantive three-week exchange projects on the stated themes. Exchange activities must promote program goals. Activities may be school and/or community-based, as appropriate to the project.
- b) Recruit American students to be engaged in activities with the foreign exchange participants.
- c) Provide opportunities for the adult participants to work with their American peers and other professionals and volunteers with whom they can discuss the support of youth development.
- d) Arrange appropriate community, cultural, social, and civic activities.
- e) Engage participants in community service activities during the U.S. program. The program should provide context for the participants – identifying community needs, volunteerism, charitable giving, etc. – and a debriefing so that the service activity is not an isolated event and helps participants see how to apply the experience at home.
- f) Provide day-to-day monitoring of the program, preventing and dealing with any misunderstandings or adjustment issues that may arise.
- g) Provide a closing session to summarize the project activities, prepare participants for their return home, and to plan for the future.

4) Follow-on activities

- a) Conduct follow-on activities with program alumni, such as seminars and other gatherings and the provision of materials, to reinforce values and skills imparted during the exchange program and to help them apply what they have learned to serve their schools and communities. This may include training led by U.S. project staff or educators.
- b) Support alumni in making presentations or preparing articles to share their

experiences.

- c) Substantive follow-on activities are required and must be funded by the Bureau grant; additional activities should be supported by non-Bureau sources.
- 5) Work in consultation with ECA and PAS in the implementation of the program, provide timely reporting of progress to ECA and PAS, and comply with financial and program reporting requirements.
- 6) Manage all financial aspects of the program, including stipend disbursements to the participants and management of sub-grant relationships with partner organizations.
- 7) Design and implement an evaluation plan that assesses the impact of the program (See section IV.3d.3 of the RFGP).

All participants will travel on a U.S. Government designation for the J Exchange Visitor Program. ECA will prepare the appropriate DS-2019 forms from the applications of accepted finalists and forward these to our representatives overseas so that participants may apply for J-1 visas for entry to the United States. The grant recipient must provide the relevant information in a timely fashion. The Bureau will provide accident and sickness health benefits at no cost to the grantee organization.

II. PROGRAM SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

Partner Organizations: An applicant must have partners in each of the participating countries. These may be branch offices of the U.S. applicant organization, non-governmental partner organizations, or other associates with demonstrated experience in educational exchange that can coordinate the program nationally and/or in the specified region. The grant recipient will be responsible for its partners' activities under the grant, both programmatically and financially. All applicants need to identify their representation in the partner countries and describe their partners' responsibilities and qualifications. Once the grant is awarded, the grant recipient and its partners must consult with the Embassy staff in the seven countries to review their plans in detail.

Participants: The participants will be teenagers between the ages of 16 and 18 at the start of the exchange who demonstrate an interest in the project themes; exhibit flexibility, maturity, integrity, good social skills, and open-mindedness; and have the motivation necessary to be active and successful exchange participants.

The adult participants will be teachers or community leaders who work with youth who have demonstrated an interest in assisting youth to become productive and responsible members of society, exhibit maturity and open-mindedness, will be supportive of the teenage participants, and are expected to remain in teaching positions or other positions of influence on young leaders.

Preference should be given to individuals who have not previously traveled to the United States, especially on a U.S. Government-sponsored program. It is desirable that several participants attend or teach at the same school or live in the same community so that they can support each other upon return.

The adult participants must be carefully selected and thoroughly briefed on their roles during the project. Although they are to be full exchange participants, they may also serve as chaperones for some program activities. The adults will participate in many of the same program sessions as the youth. The grantee organization will also provide some separate professional development activities just for them. It is important that they be prepared to allow the students to be vocal, candid, and active participants who do not feel they need to defer to the teacher. At the same time, their shared experience with the students will allow them to serve as adult advocates for the alumni once they have returned home.

Orientations: The grant recipient will conduct pre-departure and welcome orientations for the participants to introduce them to the host community and to prepare them for the activities ahead. The orientations should include a general political, historical, educational, and cultural introduction to the United States, plus information related specifically to the objectives and themes of the program, as well as practical and administrative information.

U.S. Program: The program delivery should be primarily interactive activities, practical experiences, and other opportunities to learn about the fundamentals of a civil society, community activism, and building leadership skills, enabling the participants to get a hands-on feel for the topic and to re-create similar activities for their peers back home.

The Bureau urges applicants to present innovative, resourceful, and effective programming ideas. Applicants should justify their choices by explaining how an inventive program plan will meet the stated goals.

The activities could include a mix of workshops or training sessions, simulations and role-playing, teambuilding exercises, case studies, volunteer service, leadership training, meetings, classroom visits, site visits, and social time among peers. Many of these should be planned in conjunction with participation in school and community activities in a way that is mutually educational for the exchange participants and their American hosts/peers. All programming should include American participants whenever possible. Cultural and recreational activities will balance the schedule.

The program will also provide opportunities for the adult educators to work with their American peers and other professionals and volunteers to learn about new topics and methods in teaching the rights and responsibilities of a citizen in a democracy and the practical application of theoretical concepts.

Examples of the kinds of program activities that may be included:

- Community service/volunteer activities
- Exercises related to increasing tolerance and cooperation and developing strategies for future collaboration and cooperation among participants
- Dialogues, simulations, role plays and other activities aimed at helping participants articulate their thoughts about the project's themes
- Programs that address common societal problems, such as the environment, drug abuse education, and public safety
- Meetings with community, business, and government leaders, including elected officials
- Teambuilding exercises
- Leadership development with workshop trainers or through organizations such as Boys and Girls Clubs of America, 4-H, and FFA
- Computer training that emphasizes research, critical thinking and analysis, and the use of the computer and Internet as a resource in education, business, and media
- Visits to historical sites, government centers, community centers, museums and landmarks that illustrate the program themes
- Conferences and training opportunities with American youth
- Sports, drama, fine arts, musical, camping and other activities which provide opportunities to participants to have fun while applying their skills
- Arts and cultural activities

The project in the United States will end with a closing session that focuses on summarizing the experience, developing action plans for activities at home, and preparing for re-entry. The participants will be encouraged and assisted with developing projects to implement on their return home. The ideas and action plans should spring from the participants, but the project staff should be prepared to assist and direct the participants in developing these plans both during the U.S.-based project and during the follow-on period.

Accommodations: Homestays with local families provide important insights into American life and should be arranged for at least half and preferably more of the exchange period. A hotel, dormitory, or other housing with adult supervision is an acceptable arrangement for the balance of the program. Host families must be screened for suitability; selected families must receive a thorough orientation to help them accommodate their guests' cultural differences.

Follow-on Activities: Alumni activities are an important part of the Bureau's exchange programs. Exchange participants should go home from the exchange prepared to conduct projects that serve a need in their schools or communities. The design, planning, and implementation of these projects will allow participants to apply what they have learned and enable them to instigate community action on a modest scale. Alumni programming in the form of seminars, newsletters, and websites provides critical program follow-on and serves to maximize and extend the benefit of the participants'

program in the United States. U.S. project staff or trainers should travel to the partner countries several months after the exchange to conduct a seminar or trainings. These activities, as well as others arranged by the in-country partner, should include some practical skills training, in addition to reinforcing the topics of the U.S. program. ECA recommends that the in-country programming for the exchange alumni be expanded to be offered to their friends and classmates as well. ECA and PAS must approve the grantee organization's program plan, including seminar objectives and itinerary, at least six weeks before it is scheduled to take place.

Evaluation: The Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) of 1993 requires that federal agencies measure the results of their programs in meeting performance goals. The proposal should demonstrate the applicant's plan to measure the long-term impact of the program. The follow-on activities will provide an opportunity to assess the impact of the U.S. project on the participants, to determine how their attitudes have changed, and to evaluate the acquisition of knowledge and skills associated with community service, leadership, and civil society.

Other notes: The recipient organization is responsible for all components of the program outlined in this document. However, the Bureau requires organizations to communicate with the Public Affairs Sections of the relevant U.S. Embassies in the participating countries on a regular basis about program activities, including recruitment and selection, orientations, publicity events, and follow-on activities. The organization must also inform the ECA program officer of their progress at each stage of the project's implementation in a timely fashion. All documents, materials, and correspondence related to the program will acknowledge this as a program of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State. Program materials need to be cleared by ECA and/or the relevant embassies prior to publication. The Bureau will retain copyright use of and be allowed to distribute materials related to this program as it sees fit.

PROPOSAL CONTENTS

Applicants should submit a complete and thorough proposal describing the program in a convincing and comprehensive manner. In the narrative, applicants should not only describe major program activities but also explain and justify their programmatic choices. Since there is no opportunity for applicants to meet with reviewing officials, the proposal should respond to the criteria set forth in the solicitation and other guidelines as clearly as possible. The proposal should address succinctly, but completely, the elements described below and must follow all format requirements. The proposal should include the following items:

TAB A - Application for Federal Assistance Cover Sheet (SF-424)

TAB B - Executive Summary

In one double-spaced page, provide the following information about the project:

1. Identification of applicant and its partner organizations in Central America
2. Outline of exchange projects
3. Overview of exchange participants
4. Beginning and ending dates of the program, including proposed dates of the exchange(s)
5. Nature of activity and venues
6. Funding level requested from the Bureau, total program cost, total cost-sharing from applicant and other sources

TAB C - Narrative

Within 20 double-spaced, single sided pages, provide a detailed description of the project addressing the areas listed below.

1. **Vision:** Describe the project objectives and the desired outcomes, i.e., the knowledge, skills, and/or attitudinal changes that the participants will acquire. Applicants should explain clearly what under-served populations they expect to reach with their project.
2. **Participating Organizations:** Identify any partner organizations essential to the implementation of the program, including their roles and the applicant's reasons for including them.
3. **Recruitment, Screening, and Selection:** Describe the applicant's proposed recruitment and selection plan. Present a plan for advertising the program. Outline both the process and the criteria by which finalists will be selected. Identify who is responsible for selection.
4. **Project Activities:** Describe the components of the exchanges, including project planning, orientations, manifestation of the project theme, educational activities, cultural activities, meetings, site visits, community service, and the closing session. A detailed draft schedule of the exchange activities must be included as an appendix in Tab E.
5. **Travel, Housing, and Other Logistics:** Describe how the applicant will arrange international travel (in compliance with the Fly America Act); domestic travel; homestay and other housing arrangements; interpretation, supervision of the participants, ground transportation; stipend disbursement; and any other relevant administrative matters.
6. **Follow-on Activities:** Describe a plan to provide follow-on activities in the partner country, including both ECA-funded and privately funded activities.
7. **Program Monitoring and Evaluation:** The progress of the grant should be monitored closely and ECA and PAS must be kept informed of activities. In the submitted proposal, applicants should include a plan describing how success in meeting the stated goals of the program will be measured and reported. ECA recommends that the proposal include a draft survey questionnaire or other technique.
8. **Diversity:** Explain how the program managers will be pro-active in supporting diversity in participant selection and in program content, demonstrating how diversity can contribute to a vibrant civil society. Diversity should be defined broadly and should include geographic, urban/rural, ethnic, racial, socio-economic, and religious diversity.

9. Institutional Capacity and Project Management: Outline the applicant organization's capacity for doing projects of this nature, including previous work with the proposed partner country and the capacity of the in-country partner organization. Describe the program staffing (individuals and responsibilities), qualifications, structure, and resources. If applicable, include this information for primary partner organizations as well.

10. Work Plan/Schedule: Outline the phases of the project planning and implementation for the entire grant period.

TAB D - Budget Submission

1) Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A)

2) Detailed Budget

The maximum level of funding available for this program is \$994,000, which will support five exchanges with seven countries. ECA intends to award one grant. The Bureau reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the program and the availability of funds.

The available funding may be used to support the program and administrative costs necessary to implement the program as described in this solicitation. Please submit a comprehensive line item budget, as stated in the Proposal Submission Instructions. An explanatory budget narrative must also be included. For clarification, any applicant applying to implement more than one project must provide separate sub-budgets for each.

Suggested program costs include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Staff travel
- Application and educational materials
- Participant travel (international, domestic, local ground transportation)
- Orientations
- Cultural and social activities
- Meeting costs
- Interpretation expenses
- Food and lodging, when not in homestay
- Follow-on activities
- Evaluation
- Stipends or allowances
- Other justifiable expenses directly related to supporting program activities

Significant cost sharing is expected and will enhance the proposal. Payments for homestays are not allowed as a grant-funded or cost-share item. While there is no rigid ratio of administrative to program costs, the Bureau urges applicants to keep administrative costs as low and reasonable as possible. Proposals should show strong administrative cost sharing contributions from the applicant, the in-country partner, and

other sources.

Maximum limits on grant funding are as follows: Books and educational materials allowance-\$100 per participant; Conference room rental costs-\$250 per day per room; Consultant fees and honoraria-\$250/day; Cultural allowance-\$150 per participant; Per diem-standard government rates; Evaluation costs- 3% of the grant. Organizations are encouraged to cost-share any rates that exceed these amounts.

Please note that there are no fees for the J-1 visas that foreign participants will use to enter the United States. Applicant organizations should budget for the participants to travel to the U.S. Embassy for visa interviews.

Exchange participants will be enrolled in the Bureau's Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges (ASPE) with no charge to the grant.

Please refer to the PSI for allowable costs and complete budget guidelines and formatting instructions.

TAB E

- *Letters of commitment from partner organizations and/or sub-grantees* The letters from the in-country partners must confirm their understanding of the specific responsibilities they are agreeing to take on if the proposal is funded.
- *Resumes* Resumes of all program staff should be included in the submission. No one resume should exceed two pages.
- *Attachments/appendices* (please limit to those materials essential for understanding the proposed program)

TAB F

1.) SF-424B, "Assurances - Nonconstruction Programs".

2.) First time applicant organizations and organizations which have not received an assistance award (grant or cooperative agreement) from the Bureau during the past three (3) years, must submit as an attachment to this form the following: (a) one copy of their Charter OR Articles of Incorporation; (b) a list of the current Board of Directors; and (c) current financial statements. Note: The Bureau retains the right to ask for additional documentation of those items included on this form.

3.) **Please note:** Effective January 7, 2009, all applicants for ECA federal assistance awards must include in their application the names of directors and/or senior executives (current officers, trustees, and key employees, regardless of amount of compensation). In fulfilling this requirement, applicants must submit information in one of the following ways:

Those who file Internal Revenue Service Form 990, "Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax," must include a copy of relevant portions of this form.

Those who do not file IRS Form 990 must submit information above in the format of their choice.

In addition to final program reporting requirements, award recipients will also be required to submit a one-page document, derived from their program reports, listing and describing their grant activities. For award recipients, the names of directors and/or senior executives (current officers, trustees, and key employees), as well as the one-page description of grant activities, will be transmitted by the State Department to OMB, along with other information required by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA), and will be made available to the public by the Office of Management and Budget on its USASpending.gov website as part of ECA's FFATA reporting requirements.

4.) Include other attachments, if applicable, i.e. the SF-LLL form, etc.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION

Please refer to Section IV.3F of the RFGP document for specific information regarding the application deadline and methods of submission. For further information on the program or the proposal submission, contact the Youth Programs Division program officer Carolyn Lantz, Telephone: (202) 203-7505; Fax: (202) 203-7529; e-mail address: LantzCS@state.gov.